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REFER TO CIA  
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CIA REVIEWED 09-Mar-2011: SANITIZED FOR RELEASE IN PART

OSD REVIEWED 08 MAR 2011 NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION

DOS REVIEWED 23-May-2011: NO OBJECTION TO RELEASE AS SANITIZED

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Henry A. Kissinger  
Assistant to the President for  
National Security Affairs

ATTENTION : R. T. Kennedy

SUBJECT : Prime Minister Bhutto's Reply to Your Message of  
21 August 1973

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2. "My Dear Dr. Kissinger,

"Please let me begin by warmly congratulating you on assuming the stewardship of the State Department with greater certainty--history will record that you restored the world more successfully than Metternich. In offering felicitations on behalf of the Government and the people of Pakistan, I would like you to know that I am personally delighted to learn of your elevation to the distinguished office of Secretary of State.

"Coming down to the effort we are making here to achieve lasting peace in the sub-continent, let me inform you that we greatly appreciate the interest the President of the USA and you personally are taking in our mission to bring peace to the tormented lands of South Asia.

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"Unfortunately, at this critical time, Pakistan has been hit mercilessly by unprecedented floods. I am travelling all the time to visit the various devastated regions. Communications have been disrupted badly. Principally for this reason, I have not been able to keep in close touch with the Pakistan delegation negotiating with the Indian Government in Delhi on our outstanding problems.

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The present position is that the Indians had presented a formula which inter alia, states that:

- "1) without exception all Bengalis be repatriated from Pakistan to Bangladesh,
- "2) the bulk of non-Bengalis to be sent from Bangladesh to Pakistan and the remaining non-Bengalis should also be admitted to Pakistan through subsequent negotiations between Pakistan and Bangladesh to be held on the basis of 'sovereign equality.'
- "3) all except 195 Pakistani prisoners of war and civilian internees be repatriated to Pakistan,
- "4) 195 prisoners of war to be detained in India and not sent to East Pakistan pending the outcome of negotiations between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh as to their future.

"These points (concern) the ones mentioned by you in your secret communication to me.

"The Pakistan delegation has been authorised by me to suggest appropriate amendments to the Indian formula. These are of the following nature:

- "a) in the interest of settlement, we will be prepared to repatriate all Bengalis from Pakistan to Bangladesh and not detain 286 Bengali officers for counter-trials in Pakistan as originally stated.

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"b) We cannot accept the bulk of non-Bengalis to be sent to Pakistan merely to satisfy Mr. Mujibur Rahman's arbitrary and racist policies. His position in this regard is politically, legally and morally untenable. However, strictly on humanitarian considerations and the interest of an overall settlement, we are prepared to accept a substantial number of non-Bengalis in the first instance and later negotiate the future of the remaining non-Bengalis in Bangladesh. Mr. Mujibur Rahman's demand is that we accept 260,000 non-Bengalis appears to be related to his estimate that about 250,000 Bengalis will leave Pakistan for Bangladesh. The actual number of the latter at present, according to the U.N. agencies, is hardly more than 150,000. We would want Mr. Mujibur Rahman to reduce the number of 195 prisoners of war to be detained in India. Whether he agrees to a reduction or not, the actual number should be detained in India and under no circumstances should any of them be transferred to Bangladesh for illegal war trials.

"As far as Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh is concerned, my Government is bound by the resolution of the National Assembly of Pakistan on this subject. The resolution authorises the Government of Pakistan to recognise Bangladesh only when all the prisoners of war have returned to Pakistan and the threatened illegal trials of our prisoners of war are completely dropped by Bangladesh. In view of this resolution, the Government of Pakistan cannot accord direct recognition to Bangladesh before all Pakistani prisoners of war have returned to Pakistan, or indirectly by holding negotiations with Mujibur Rahman on the basis of 'sovereign equality' prior to the return of all prisoners of war to Pakistan. Except for this condition, we are prepared to meet Mujibur Rahman at any time at any place to narrow down our mutual differences resulting from the secession of East Pakistan by virtue of India's armed attack.

"I have further authorised the Pakistan Delegation to Delhi Talks to offer India and Bangladesh a comprehensive and a complete solution as an alternative to the above step-by-step approach. This total solution would also include, besides the proposals I have mentioned, repatriation of 195 Pakistani prisoners of war and simultaneous recognition of Bangladesh by us which would also facilitate lifting of the veto against its admission to the U.N.

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"I am communicating our final position to you in the strictest confidence. It has not yet been disclosed to India. Any (premature) revelation will seriously jeopardise our negotiating position in our search for an equitable settlement. Furthermore, since I am speaking from memory and without consulting my Foreign Office, there might be some minor inaccuracies in the points mentioned by me.

With warmest personal regards,  
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto"

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